How to make a Good Confession

1. Examine your conscience.
2. Be sincerely sorry for your sins.
3. Confess your sins to a priest.
4. Resolve to amend your life.
5. Do the assigned penance.

In the Confessional, you say:
"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been [*length of time*] since my last confession. These are my sins."

Then confess any mortal sins and the number of times committed. If you have no mortal sins to confess, then confess any venial sins you have committed since your last confession.

Then say: "For these and all the sins of my past, I am truly sorry." The priest may give advice on avoiding sin, then he assigns your penance.

Next, say an **Act of Contrition**.

Listen as the priest absolves you from all your sins, and then say "Thank you, Father" and leave the confessional.

There are **two kinds** of actual sin: mortal and venial. **Mortal sin** is an act that is so gravely immoral before God as to be entirely incompatible with true love of God and neighbor. To be an actual mortal sin, the act must be gravely immoral, and be chosen with full knowledge of its grave immorality and with full freedom of choice. Only actual mortal sin takes away the state of grace received at Baptism.

Venial sin is contrary to the true love of God and neighbor, but only to a substantially limited extent. Venial sins do not deserve eternal punishment, nor do they take away the state of grace.

An Examination of Conscience
from the Ten Commandments

1. You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone. Do I love God above all else? Do I worship God by prayer, self-denial, and works of mercy? Do I faithfully adhere to the teachings of Tradition, Scripture, and the Magisterium?
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Have I misused God's name or violated an oath? Am I guilty of sacrilege against a Sacrament or any holy person, place, or object?
3. Keep holy the Sabbath. Have I deliberately missed Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day without a just reason? Have I kept Sunday as a day for rest and the worship of God? Do I work needlessly on Sunday? Do I make others work needlessly on Sunday?
4**. Honor your father and your mother.** Do I honor my parents? Have I neglected my duties to my spouse and children? Have I been a good example to my family? Do I care for my aged and infirm relatives? Do I respect persons in authority over me, including my pastor, my bishop, and the Pope?
5. You shall not murder. Have I deliberately harmed myself or others? Have I obtained or condoned abortion, or used abortifacient contraception? Have I chosen hatred or malice in my heart or mind? Have I abused alcohol or drugs?
6. You shall not commit adultery. Have I engaged in sex outside of marriage? Have I been faithful to my marriage vows? Have I used contraception? Have I committed any unnatural sexual acts in my marriage? Has each sexual act in my marriage been unitive and procreative? Have I committed sins of masturbation or pornography? Have I committed homosexual sins? Have I treated other persons as sexual objects? Do I seek to be pure in thought, word, and deed?
7. You shall not steal. Have I committed any type of theft? Do I misuse my money, so as to deny my family their needs? Do I pay my debts ? Do I share what I have with those in need?
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. Have I lied for any reason? Have I used words to cause harm? Am I uncharitable in thought or word? Am I an honest person?
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. Have I committed the grave sin of lust or any interior sexual sins? Have I led anyone else into sexual sin? Am I chaste and modest in thought, word, and deed?
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods. Am I jealous of what other people have? Do I envy other people's employees or possessions? Am I greedy or selfish? Do I give my possessions greater importance than they deserve? Do I trust that God will care for all of my material and spiritual needs?

Act of Contrition

My God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You. I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend You, my God, Who is all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to avoid sin and near occasions of sin. **Amen.**